ing himself with scholars and founded a higher school at his capital. It was a revivified Empire which he passed on to his successor, Ming Ti.

The political history of the next century and a half need detain us but very briefly. A succession of Emperors, none of them especially noteworthy, perpetuated the Han line. Several of these at their accession were infants and most of the others came to the throne in their teens. The immaturity of the rulers encouraged court intrigues, and the power of the women of the palace and the baleful influence of the eunuchs increased. With such feeble leadership, the house of Han was obviously nearing its end. Confucian scholars persistently protested against the eunuchs and the abuses in government. At times their efforts were effective, but they could not long retard the decay. Toward the close of the second century the eunuchs were strong enough to take heavy toll from among their adversaries. Insurrections broke out, bands called the Yellow Turbans making themselves particularly obnoxious. These Yellow Turbans were a Taoist sect, and in a certain sense the downfall of the Han was due to a Taoist revolt against the Confucianism dominant in the bureaucracy.

The army asserted itself at court to control the eunuchs, and, toward the close of the second century, a general, Tung Cho, made himself master of the Emperors, supplanting one boy puppet by another. In A.D. 190 Tung Cho burned the capital, Loyang, and established himself and the futile monarch at Ch'angan. For two years he ruled with a high hand, ruthlessly crushing all opposition and giving a show of legality to his acts by declaring that they were performed in the name of the Emperor. The country

did not accept him quietly, however, jealous rivals formed a coalition against him, and he was assassinated (A.D. 192) by one of his own lieutenants, an adopted son.

The struggle for power continued until Ts'ao Ts'ao, the son of the adopted son of a former chief eunuch, and an extraordinarily able but utterly unscrupulous and extremely crafty man, made himself supreme at court. The imbecile boy whom Tung Cho had placed on the throne was shorn more and more of his prerogatives, but was allowed to retain the title of Emperor, until, in A.D. 220, on Ts'ao Ts'ao's death, he was persuaded to cede the throne to Ts'ao Ts'ao's son, Ts[5]ao P'ei. Ts'ao P'ei founded a